

Message Text

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SUBJ BACKGROUND AND HISTORY - RHEIN-MAIN AIR BASE

ON JULY 8, 1936 RHEIN-MAIN BEGAN OPERATIONS AS AN AIRPORT
WITH THE LANDING OF A LUFTHANSA JUNKERS TRANSPORT ON THE SINGLE
STRIP OF CONCRETE THAT SERVED AS THE AIRPORT'S RUNWAY.
THE TWO GIANT GERMANY AIRSHIPS, THE GRAF ZEPPELIN AND THE
HINDENBURG, BEGAN THEIR REGULAR NON-STOP TRANS-ATLANTIC FLIGHTS
FROM RHEIN-MAIN. THE AIRSHIP ERA ENDED TRAGICALLY IN 1937
WITH THE BURNING OF THE HINDENBURG AT LAKEHURST, J.J.
DURING WORLD WAR II THE GERMAN LUFTWAFFE USED THE RHEIN-MIAN
AIRPORT TO SUPPORT GERMANY MILITARY OPERATIONS. THE BASE
WAS CAPTURED BY THE ALLIES IN 1945 WHO LAUNCHED AIR SUPPORT
MISSION FROM ITS HASTILY REPAIRED RUNWAYS. AFTER THE WAR
ATTENTION WAS DRAWN TO RHEIN-MAIN WHEN IT DELIVERED MORE THAN
12,900 TONS OF FOOD, COAL AND OTHER NECESSITIES TO BERLIN DURING
THE 16 MONTH AIRLIFT OF 1948 AND 1949. ON ONE DAY ALONE THE
CONTROL TOWER AT RHEIN-MAIN LOGGED 635 TAKE-OFFS AND LANDINGS.
SINCE 1959, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF NATO, RHEIN-MAIN AIR BASE
BECAME THE MAIN SUPPLY AND SUPPORT BASE FOR THE UNITED STATES
AIR FORCES IN EUROPE AND IS FREQUENTLY USED AS A MAIN BUILD-
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UP POINT DURING MILITARY EXERCISES. TODAY, THE HOST ORGANIZATION,
THE 435TH TACTICAL AIRLIFT WING OF THE MILITARY AIRLIFT COMMAND
(MAC) HAS THE PRIMARY MISSION TO PROVIDE STRATEGIC, TACTICAL
AND AEROMEDICAL AIRLIFT WITHIN THE EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS.
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